




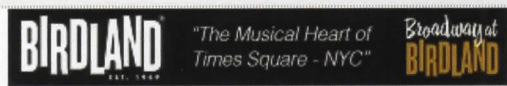
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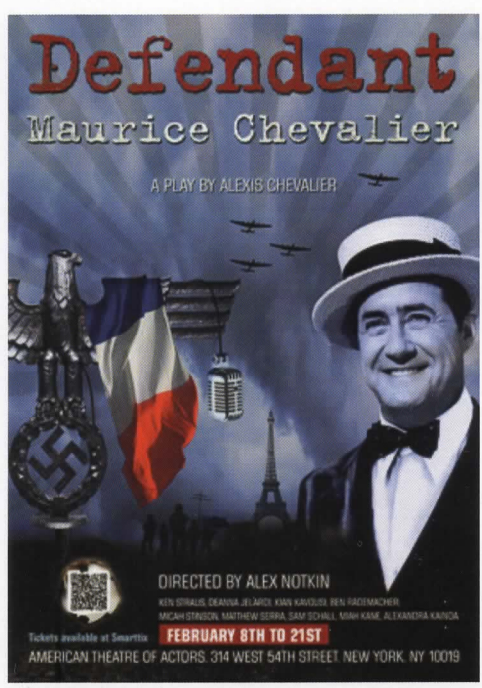
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DEFENDANT MAURICE CHEVALIER to Run 2/8-21 at ATA's John Cullum Theatre

January 20 11:32 AM 2016

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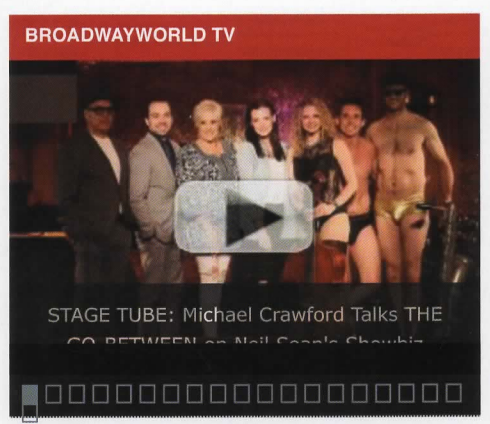


Nascent Productions presents Defendant Maurice Chevalier, a new play by Alexis Chevalier with music from the 1930's and 40's at American Theatre of Actors, in the John Cullum Theatre opening on February 8 and running through February 21. Alex Notkin directs. Kian Kavousi is production manager. Musical direction by Chang Liu with vocal supervision by Christina Dinella. Choreography by Elena Notkina and Inna Muratova. The cast features Ken Straus, Deanna Jelardi, Kian Kavousi, Matthew Serra, Micah Stinson, Ben Rademacher, Sam Schall, Alexandra Kainoa and Miah Kane.

Accused of treason for collaborating with the Nazis during their occupation of France, popular French singer and entertainer Maurice Chevalier goes on trial for his life in the aftermath of World War II. In view of a probable death sentence he is

confronted by a judge to answer whether or not the accusations made against him are true. Chevalier is given pause to reflect on the years following his success in Hollywood when he returned to the Paris stage and fell in love with Nita Raya, a promising young actress whom he married. At that point the singing star faced his greatest trial; how to protect his Jewish bride from detection by the Nazis during the war years while maintaining his performing career and status as the worldwide symbol of France. Caught between the demands of German propaganda, the collaborators and the French Resistance, Chevalier reveals his side of the story.

Born and raised in France, playwright and actor Alexis Chevalier is the great grandnephew of



Maurice Chevalier. Although his great uncle is remembered with fondness by many around the world, he is still criticized for his controversial involvement with the Vichy government during World War II. Only **Maurice Chevalier** attempted to re-establish the truth of his position during the war years in his writings. It is from these writings that Defendant **Maurice Chevalier** was created. The play won the annual Strasberg Works Contest in 2015 and was initially performed at **Lee Strasberg Theatre and Film Institute**. A Strasberg alumnus, Alexis recently completed the screenplay for a new feature film that he will also direct in Spain.

Director and versatile actor Alex Notkin has directed productions of *I Remember It Well* and *Chekhov, The Untold* at the **Marilyn Monroe Theater** and the satiric mini-opera *Loitering* at Manhattan Repertory. A native of St. Petersburg, he is a well known theater and film actor in Russia and has played leads *Umbrellas of Cherbourg* on stage and in the film *Vasilisa*. His voice over credits include dubbing **Sam Worthington's** role in *AVATAR* and **Christan Bale's** in *Terminator 4, Salvation*. He holds a U.S. Artist Visa for "Extraordinary Abilities and Achievement in the field of Performing Arts".

New York based actor **Kian Kavousi** managed all production details for Defendant **Maurice Chevalier** and is the only actor who will play two diverse roles in it. Born in Germany, he grew up in an artistic family and began his acting studies at an early age. A graduate of the **Lee Strasberg Theatre Institute** and protégé of **Vincent D'Onofrio**, he can be seen in the new feature film *Miles* with **Paul Reiser** and **Missi Pyle**.

Musical director **Chang Liu** is a jazz guitarist in cinema and live performance and has worked closely with world renowned jazz artists such as **Billy Harper** and **Tim Berne** performing in the US and Europe.

Defendant **Maurice Chevalier** begins at American Theatre of Actors in the **John Cullum Theatre** (314 W. 54th Street between 8th and 9th Avenues) on Monday February 8 and runs thru Sunday February 21. Performances are Monday thru Friday at 7PM, Saturday and Sunday at 2PM and 7PM. General admission is \$35 and \$25 for students. For tickets go to www.smartix.com or call (212) 868-4444.

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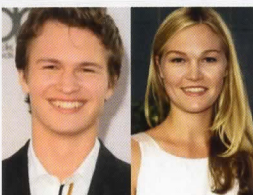
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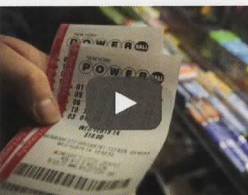
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